

Message Text

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FOR EUR ONLY

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN FROM KUBISCH

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, PFOR, US, GR
SUBJECT: BASE NEGOTIATIONS: SOME THOUGHTS ON TEAM STRUCTURE AND
APPROACH

1. IN PLANNING FOR THE RESUMPTION OF BASE NEGOTIATIONS
WITH GREECE, I RECOMMEND WE RECONSIDER THE STRUCTURE OF
OUR NEGOTIATING TEAM AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SOME OF THE
LESSONS LEARNED IN PREVIOUS ROUNDS.

2. AS YOU KNOW, THE NEGOTIATIONS STARTED ORIGINALLY IN
THE SPRING OF 1975 ENTIRELY ON THE INITIATIVE OF THE
GREEK GOVERNMENT. THEY, IN TURN, WERE MOTIVATED BY
DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE AFTERMATH OF
THE EVENTS OF 1974. THEY WERE IN NO HURRY TO COMPLETE
THEM, NOR WERE WE. THEY NEGOTIATIONS WERE HANDLED FOR MORE THAN
A YEAR THROUGH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS WITH PERIODIC
ROUNDS OF MEETINGS, OUR TEAM BEING HEADED BY
DCM STEARNS.

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3. THE CONCLUSION AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE TURKISH DCA
IN MARCH 1976 BROUGHT ABOUT A MUCH-CHANGED SITUATION. THE GOG WAS
GALVANIZED INTO SEEKING A COMPARABLE ARRANGEMENT, WITH GUARANTEED,
CONGRESSIONALLY-ENDORSED, MULTI-YEAR FUNDING. AT THE
SAME TIME, IN SPITE OF OUR ENORMOUS PRESSURES ON HIM,
CARAMANLIS REFUSED TO DE-COUPLE THE OVERALL GREEK DCA

FROM ITS MASS OF SUPPORTING DECOMENTATION, INSISTING THAT OUR YEAR-LONG TRACK OF NEGOTIATING ALL THE ANNEXES, APPENDICES, IMPLEMENTING AGREEMENTS, ETC., ALSO BE CARRIED THROUGH TO COMPLETION. BOTH GOVERNMENTS ALSO CONTINUED WITH THE SAME NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBERSHIP AND STRUCTURE.

4. YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE SUMMER. WE MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS BUT COULDN'T FINISH. WHEN STEARNS WAS PHASING OUT IN AUGUST FOR HIS NEW ASSIGNMENT, I TOOK DIRECT CHARGE OF THE TEAM AND WE MADE A HUGE PUSH DOWN THE HOMESTRETCH BEFORE CONGRESS ADJOURNED. BUT STILL NO FINISH.

5. WHY? WITHOUT REOPENING THE QUESTIONS OF GOG TACTICS, OR THE INHERENT COMPLEXITIES OF THE AGREEMENTS UNDER NEGOTIATION THEMSELVES, I THINK AT LEAST A PART OF THE PROBLEM WAS OUR OWN TEAM AND OUR APPROACH. MANY OF THE TEAM MEMBERS REPRESENTED VESTED-INTEREST AGENCIES OR ELEMENTS WITHIN THE USG AND ON OCCASION GUARDED THEIR OWN POSSIBLE TRADE-OFFS IN EXPECTATION OF CONCESSIONS BY OTHER PARTS OF OUR GOVERNMENT, IN ORDER TO GIVE AWAY AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE OF THEIR OWN AGENCY'S POSITION. THUS, INSTEAD OF FACILITATING A COMPLETION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, THEY BECAME PART OF THE PROBLEM. I AM NOT SURE WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THIS BUT A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION WOULD BE TO HAMMER OUT THE BEST POSSIBLE OVERALL USG NEGOTIATING POSITIONS AND STRATEGY IN WASHINGTON AND THEN SEND THE SMALLEST POSSIBLE TEAM TO ATHENS, EMPOWERED TO CARRY
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OUT THE NEGOTIATIONS.

6. IN ADDITION, IF WE WANT TO COMPLETE THE NEGOTIATIONS VERY QUICKLY I BELIEVE A VERY SENIOR HIGH-LEVEL US OFFICIAL, PROBABLY FROM WASHINGTON, WHO COULD SPEND 100 PERCENT OF HIS TIME ON THEM, SHOULD BE DESIGNATED TO LEAD THEM. THIS COULD PROVIDE A VALUABLE CENTER OF AUTHORITY IN WASHINGTON AND INTERJECT AN IMPERATIVE OF URGENCY WHEN THE NEGOTIATOR AND HIS TEAM CAME TO ATHENS. THE EMBASSY STAFF WOULD, OF COURSE, BE FULLY AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT AND ASSIST IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE.

7. IF IT IS DECIDED THAT THE DCM OR AMBASSADOR SHOULD

HEAD THE NEGOTIATING TEAM, WE CAN OF COURSE DO THIS. HOWEVER, WE WILL PAY A PRICE. AS YOU WELL KNOW, IT IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR AN AMBASSADOR OR A DCM IN A BUSY EMBASSY LIKE ATHENS, OVERSEEING AND DIRECTING THE WORK OF HUNDREDS -- EVEN THOUSANDS -- OF PEOPLE AND CARRYING OUT

A FULL RANGE OF US GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, TO DEVOTE HIS TOTAL ATTENTION AND TIME TO ANY ONE SUBJECT -- ALMOST NO MATTER HOW IMPORTANT IT IS -- FOR WEEKS AT A TIME. I THINK THIS WAS ALSO PART OF OUR PROBLEM LAST SUMMER. MOREOVER, WHEN I TOOK OVER THE NEGOTIATIONS FULLY IN SEPTEMBER, I FOUND I COULD NO LONGER SEE BITSIOS AND AVEROFF PRIVATELY, FOR EXAMPLE, TO DISCUSS NEGOTIATING DIFFICULTIES. WHENEVER I RAISED THE SUBJECT WITH EITHER OF THEM, THEY IMMEDIATELY SENT FOR CALOGERAS AND I FOUND MYSELF, IN A SENSE, REDUCED TO HIS LEVEL, WITH THE MINISTER "PRESIDING" OVER A NEGOTIATING OR BICKERING SESSION BETWEEN US. THUS, WE LOST FOR THAT PERIOD SOME OF THE ADDED POLITICAL FORCE I COULD BRING TO BEAR ON THE NEGOTIATIONS.

8. A FINAL POINT: I SENSE THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT, WHILE CONTINUING TO BE READY TO COMPLETE THE NEGOTIATIONS EXPEDITIOUSLY, DOES NOT ACCORD THEM ANYTHING LIKE

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THE HIGH PRIORITY THAT WE HAVE GIVEN THEM. A NEW INDICATION OF THIS WAS THE DESIGNATION YESTERDAY OF BYRON THEODOROPOULOS, WHO HAD BEEN SLATED TO LEAD THE GREEK SIDE OF THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS, TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FTR THE GREECE-EEC NEGOTIATIONS, TO WHICH THEY OBVIOUSLY ATTACH FAR GREATER IMPORTANCE. AS YOU KNOW, THE GREEK SIDE IS THIN AND NOT OVER-LOADED WITH TALENT (THIS ALSO WAS ONE OF OUR PROBLEMS LAST SUMMER), AND I FEAR IT WILL NOT BE EASY TO GET OUR GREEK FRIENDS REALLY CRANKED UP AND WELL ORGANIZED FOR A RAPID AND SURE-FIRE CONCLUDING ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS. ONE WAY TO OVERCOME THIS WOULD BE FOR THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL ON OUR SIDE TO OBTAIN A COMMITMENT FROM CARAMANLIS THAT HE WOULD SEE THAT THEY WERE FINISHED PROMPTLY -- POSSIBLY ON THE OCCASION OF A CARAMANLIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON, IF ONE CAN BE ARRANGED SOMETIME EARLY THIS YEAR.

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